

REMARKS

The Specification has been amended to indicate that this application is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/717,888 (the parent application), filed November 20, 2000. Claims 1-53, which were originally pending in the parent application, have been canceled. New claims 54-64 have been added. Applicants respectfully requests entry of this Preliminary Amendment and favorable consideration and allowance of this application is requested.

Applicants make this Preliminary Amendment prior to examination and without prejudice or disclaimer of any excluded subject matter, and expressly reserve the right to pursue such subject matter in this application or in one or more continuing applications.

In the unlikely event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952** referencing docket no. 415142000303. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

Dated: February 18, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

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